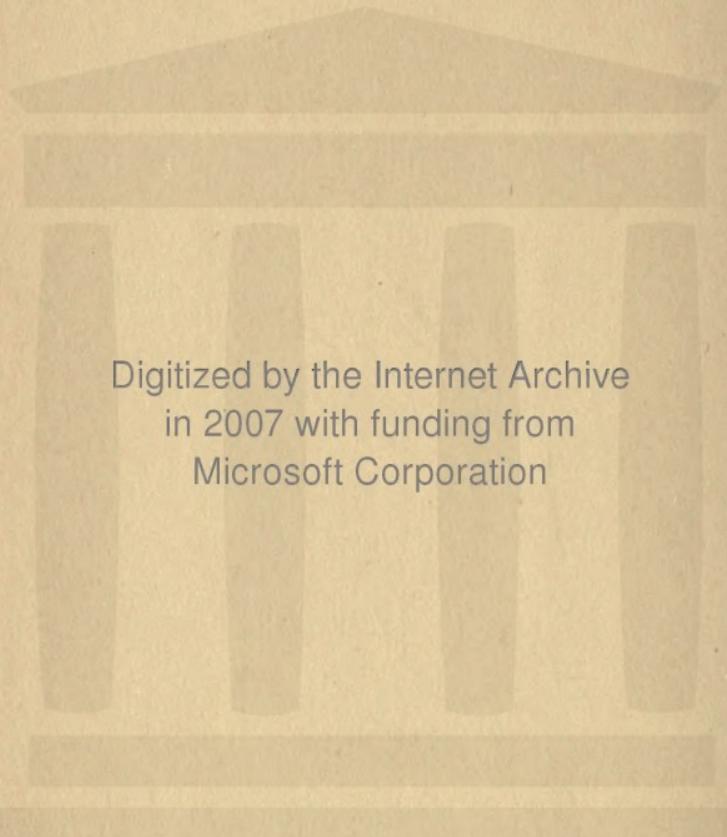


The HARP of LIFE

NETTIE P. ALLEMONG



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THE HARP OF LIFE



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THE HARP of LIFE

by
NETTIE P. ALLEMONG

*"And love took up the harp of life
and smote on all the strings."*

LOCKSLEY HALL.



1922

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To

*The Memory of that Love which taught
My Heart to Sing*

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Salutation

A bard unknown to fame salutes you here,
Presents these simple rhymes with trembling
fear,
Like songs of birds, they claim no lyric art;
But as the Muse impelled, flowed from the
heart.
Here love full oft has struck life's throbbing
lyre;
In swelling strains essayed its high desire.
Grief too has voiced its ever mournful note,
In plaintive song which welled the singers
throat.
Mirth's airy mood as well has told its Jest
In careless strain, which suits its tenor best.
Thro all these varied themes of poesy,
Some heart may throb with mine in sympathy,
In dreams may fare with me the sunset ways
To hallowed scenes of life's bright yesterdays.
Repaid am I if here I've made one constant
friend,
Whose path some song may cheer unto the end.
Tho critic minds condemn the work unfit to
live,
They can at least, in charity, FORGIVE.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Eventide

Eventide, an empty nest, a robin's plaintive call,
Unheeding sit two little birds beside my garden wall.
With pleading notes the mother calls the brood unto her breast,
Two little birds the world have seen, forgot the parent nest.
With eyes that see love's finished task as fall the shadows gray
Westward on unresting wing, the robin flies away.

Eventide, an empty home, a mother old and gray,
To distant scenes the world has called her group of five away.
As twilight falls, in dreams she sings to babes upon her breast,
And o'er the cradle bends again with prayer for peaceful rest,

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As empty home and vacant crib melt in the
 shadows gray

Where shine the hills and faces smile, the
 mother flies away.

THE HARP OF LIFE

To a Released Bird

My beautiful captive, I set you free
To make your home in the forest tree.
No more shall your cries for life be heard,
My cage-prisoned suffering striving bird ;
You shall sweep the vaults of the azure blue
As an All wise God intended you to.
When your mates invite from the branches high,
You will answer back with a Joyous cry.
Free to choose from the birds that rove
The forest halls a mate you will love ;
Free to anchor a new-home nest
Where birdlings will cheer the brooding breast.

Like a silken sail by the breeze upborne,
You shall fly aloft on the wings of morn.
From a new found home, you will wander forth
To the wooded cliffs of the wind-swept North.
You shall lave your breast in the silvery foam,
And sing on the heights of the cliff-built home.
You will hear God's voice in the thunder loud,
And read His smile on the sun-lit cloud.
On the wings of Joy you will cheerily go

THE HARP OF LIFE

From the mountain heights to the vales below
To gather food where the fancy calls
In the mossy dells, by the waterfalls.

- You will dive and sing with your mates at play
As children sport with the ocean's spray.
Your beautiful notes so clear and free,
Will rise o'er the forest harmony.
The listening ear of the passing throng
Will thrill with Joy at your raptured song,
And when at eve to your nest you turn,
While the Western skies yet faintly burn
As you rest secure in the sheltering tree
I will think how much you have been to me,
And dream of a day that will have no night
When I'll see you again in scenes of light.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Take Me Home to Old Virginia

Take me home to old Virginia, to the roof of
kindred ties,
Where my heart in dreams is living in the light
of loving eyes,
Take me back to old surroundings, sacred
scenes of other days,
Where these feet in youth have wandered over
sun-enchanted ways.

Let me feel the morning breezes blown from
musky clover dales,
See the waving harvests spreading over peace-
ful, smiling vales.
Let me taste the ripened fruitage of its
orchards and its vines,
Rest again beneath the arbor where the trumpet
creeper twines.

Let me see the Alleghany with its glory-misted
heights,
Reaching starward in its grandeur on the silver
summer nights,

THE HARP OF LIFE

Let me hear the mellow music of the dancing
mountain rills,
Leaping down from heights of silence, through
the shadow-cloistered hills.

Let me gaze on loved Mt. Vernon, and historic
Arlington.

Sacred shrines of great Virginians, noble Lee
and Washington.

Let me look on Monticello where the slanting
morning sun

Gilds with gold the famous roof tree of immor-
tal Jefferson.

Let me linger near Manassas, on the sod where
legends tell

How the valiant Southern soldiers, nobly
fought and nobly fell

Let me dream at Appomatox of the unforgotten
day

When the North and South forever laid the
deadly sword away.

Let me wander down by Piedmont thro the
Rappahanock vales,

Where the Tuckahoe is monarch of the daisy-
dappled dales.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Where the old Virginia darky sits beside his
cabin door,
Dreaming dreams of bygone glory, and the
days that come no more.

Let me see the stately mansions all along the
rolling James,
Where escutcheons bear forever many proud
historic names,
Let me trace old paths thro Richmond, Holly-
wood, the Soldiers Home;
Rest my heart in reverent silence there beneath
the State House dome.

O Virginians of Virginians, you are all the
world to me!
In my heart your proud position leaves no
room for rivalry.
Other states and other peoples claim my
recreant thoughts apart;
You Virginia, and Virginians have my friends,
my thoughts, my heart.

Take me home to those who love me, to the roof
of kindred ties;
Let me see the welcome smiling in the light of
loving eyes.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Let me share their dreams, their sorrows, daily
happiness and toil,
And in death, by them surrounded, rest in
peace in sacred soil.

THE HARP OF LIFE

To the Hierarchy in the Bush

How much do you know of the skylark's song,
Who carols his soul's deep pleasure
In rapturous notes which pour from his throat
In fluent, melodious measure?

How much do you know of the mournful lay,
He chirps o'er a lone nest grieving,
For the loved ones flown which were once his
own,
As the old home-bower he is leaving?

Who spreads to his view the beautiful blue,
And earth for his admiration;
Has fashioned the note of his minstrel throat,
Interprets the inspiration.

However the song, if mournful or glad
In lyrical measures, or broken;
The notes that could flow to you crities below
He graciously leaves unspoken.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Swinging on the Gate

To Gladys

You mothers whose dear children God took in
early years,
Whose Joys were your deep pleasures, whose
sorrows caused your tears,
Will understand the reason I let dull duties
wait,
To paint a mem'ry picture of a child upon a
gate.

'Twas at my garden entrance, one cloudless eve
in June ;
When roses wreathed the porchway in riotous
festoon ;
While yet a lark was singing a love song to his
mate,
A child watched for my coming, swinging on
the gate.

I thought to steal upon her, and catch her un-
aware,
To print a kiss blindfolded, upon her forehead
fair,

THE HARP OF LIFE

When suddenly she spied me, and cried with
heart elate,
“I’m waiting for you Mamma, swinging on the
gate!”

Her Joyous tone of greeting, the gladness in
her eyes

Broke on my heart as sunlight transforms the
eastern skies;

Her clinging handclasp told me why love and
life were sweet,

As through the door she led me, on lightsome,
dancing feet.

New values seemed to greet me in home’s
familiar store;

The doll within the rocker, the toys upon the
floor.

And when the supper lamplight shone round
her picture plate,

She told again the story of watching at the
gate.

Ere summer flowers had faded, or nesting birds
had flown;

My little one had vanished, and I was left
alone.

THE HARP OF LIFE

And as in wondering silence and empty rooms
I wait,
I seem to hear her calling, when swings the
garden gate.

One evening, worn from sorrow, I fell asleep
and dreamed
That life and love continue, that what was
death but seemed
A viewless curtain parted, beyond which loved
ones wait,
To welcome home our coming thro Heaven's
eternal gate.

Content, I wait life's evening, when from my
hands shall fall
My work, perhaps unfinished, in answer to His
call,
For one will hail my coming where angel
children wait,
I'm watching for you Mamma, at the open gate.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Snow Fall

The earth newly-manteled is wondrously still
As flutter the flakes over valley and hill.
Like some fairy curtains let down on the scene,
Shuts out all the landscape and objects between.
While down thro the branches, new-feathered
with pearl,
The snowflakes unceasingly, silently whirl.

The paths and the highways have vanished
from sight,
The snowbirds for refuge have taken their
flight.
The trees in the orchard, like ghosts in a row,
Stand hooded in raiment new-fashioned from
snow,
The grape-arbor shines with its lily-shaped
flowers,
O'er latticed with garlands as Japanese bowers.

The hawthorne resembles a stately young bride,
With veil of illusion which falls at her side,
The cypress in rival is coated in fleece,

THE HARP OF LIFE

With bonnet new-feathered with down of the
geese.

The garden resplendent in vestments of white,
Presents to the vision a wonderful sight.

Shut in from the storm that is raging without,
Contented, we circle the bright hearth about.
Where rich, roasting apples with cider o'er-run,
While pop fly the chestnuts to heighten the fun.
Each face and each heart is with gladness
aglow,

As lamps thro the windows shine out on the
snow.

When night with its shadows has covered the
earth,

And beckoned to dreamland the group from the
hearth;

The children close-folded in each downy bed,
In visions are happy with snowshoe and sled,
While silently down on the white scene below
On homestead and barn falls the beautiful
snow.

Ere Dawn's fairy fingers had opened our eyes,
She spread for our vision a wondrous surprise,

THE HARP OF LIFE

The earth's snowy bosom with gems was aglow,
The house was of marble, new-sculptured from
snow,

The gateposts were pillars of ivory white,
Each tree hung with Jewels, a glittering sight.
The barn was a castle with turrets and towers,
The hedge in the garden was laden with flowers,
The well and the windlass with coral were
hung,

While fair o'er the woodshed an awning was
flung.

All spotless and white was the new scene below,
Transformed in a night by the mystical snow.

Thro highways new-broken, o'er hilltop and
dells,

O'er regions of stillness rang merry sleigh bells.
The children were off for a skate by the mill,
To harden a track for a coast down the hill.
Then ho for the Storm King, for Winters gay
show!

Heighho for the Joys of the beautiful snow !

THE HARP OF LIFE

When a Fellow Needs a Friend

Not when skies are arched and sunny,
And he's well supplied with money ;
When his hives are dripping honey
Where the fruitful branches bend,
Not when banks their cash will lend him,
Social pets and peers attend him ;
Not when law and press defend him,
Does a fellow need a friend.

But when storms of ill o'ertake him,
And temptations lurk to shake him :
When his one-time friends forsake him,
And he's reached his tether's end.
When by landlord he's ejected,
And by creditors rejected,
When by no one he's protected,
Then is when he needs a friend.

When his business comrades doubt him,
Slyly sneer and talk about him,
From their chosen circle rout him
To a more despairing end,

THE HARP OF LIFE

When the world and press accuse him,
And in covert ways abuse him,
When his kinsman too misuse him,
Does a fellow need a friend.

When his house and lands are taken,
And his confidence is shaken ;
When by God he seems forsaken,
Is the time to be his friend.

Then he needs what you can lend him,
Kindly speech to recommend him,
With your heart and purse defend him,
Till his broken life you mend.

Though an outcast bruised, and battered,
Years of savings wrecked and scattered,
With his dreams and prospects shattered,
Save misfortune to the end,
You can better his condition,
Stir his soul with new ambition,
Help him gain his old position,
If you try to be his friend.

Help him meet a new to-morrow,
Free from penury and sorrow ;
Show to him that he can borrow
From a man who has to lend.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Let your friendship flow to meet him,
As your smile and handshake greet him,
Prove no foe can e'er defeat him,
Who in you has found a friend.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Our Ready Ally

The talk about the devil as the worst of human
foes
That his wicked schemes and cunning underlie
most mortal woes,
But I've the frank impression, tho' his friend-
ship you disclaim;
You'll accept him for an ally if he helps you
win the game.

Should the adversary find you on some island
in distress,
And in briney leagues would sink you in your
abject helplessness;
Should his Majesty confront you and present a
two-edged sword,
Would you spurn his saving weapon, and be
shuffled overboard?

Should disease and death come prowling round
your home in wants-disguise
And the tears of little children plead with you
from hungry eyes;

THE HARP OF LIFE

If by stealth you spared them famine with a
loaf from Mammon's board,
Would you thank this ready ally, or deceitful
thank the Lord?

Were a scheming world around me with its
threatening look and word,
And from nether pits of sorrow, let my cries go
up unheard;
Tho good people all may scorn him, and the
churches put to rout,
I'm no saint—I'll take the devil, if he's there
to help me out.

Too Late!

Too late when the loved have vanished
To wish for the bygone days;

Wherein we could scatter kindness,
Or utter the words of praise.

Too late when the rose is shattered,
To gather its rich perfume;

Or Joy in the glowing beauty
That smiled in its velvet bloom.

Too late when the years are numbered
And fortune has passed us by;

To wish for the wealth we've squandered,
As ruins about us lie,

"Too late" locked the shining portals
Of bright opportunity,

When shut from our sight forever,
Was a golden reality.

Too late! O chimes in the distance,
How often your sweet refrain
Doth echo Regrets' sad message
From lips that are white with pain!

THE HARP OF LIFE

As up from the founts of sorrow
The penitent teardrops start,
There knells in your notes of pathos,
The cry of a broken heart.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Tryst

When twilight shadows close the day,
And veil these aching eyes,
To keep its tryst my soul goes forth
To love's pure paradise.

Released, on Joyful wing it flies
To find the hallowed place
Where your sweet spirit eager waits
To meet its soft embrace.

As to its nest at eventide
Returns the homing dove,
So in your heart it nestles close
And sings its song of love.

THE HARP OF LIFE

My Rival

She holds him her captive, this charmer of men,
Who beguiles with her caprice to woo him
again.

She weaves 'round his visions a spell of delight;
Coquets with his fancy far into the night.

She goes to his office, and ere he's aware
She saucily tempts him to banish his care.
She bids him forget all that's purchased with
gold,
And yield to the Joys that shall never grow
old.

She is close by his side in the sweetness of dusk,
To ravish his senses with exquisite musk;
To press on his lips tender kiss after kiss,
And woo his affections to orbits of bliss.

I see him caress her, and smile at her charms,
Till drunk with her influence, he opens his
arms;
And tosses her from him, then stands with a
stare
To see she has vanished—a dream in the air.

THE HARP OF LIFE

But what am I telling, a story untrue
Of him whom I worship, who worships me too?
Why fancy has led me to regions afar;
In truth—she's a fragrant Havana cigar.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Virginia

Proud mother-State, thy noble name
Enkindles hearts with sacred flame.
Is wreathed with ever-living fame,
Virginia!

O'er empire's path, thy natal star
Led Christian Pilgrims from afar,
Offspring of sacrifice and war,
Virginia.

Thine is an ever-open gate
To those of high or less estate,
Where opportunities await,
Virginia.

Thy sons revere their native sod,
Ancestral homes, ancestral blood,
Have faith in men, and faith in God,
Virginia.

Thy mountains pierce the opal mist,
Where shine majestic peaks sunkissed;
Beneath soft skies of amethyst,
Virginia.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The wonders of thy caverned hills,
Thy rock-ribbed Bridge and singing rills,
Thy sacred shrines the spirit thrills,
 Virginia!

Thy vales are clothed with waving grain,
Rich-fruited trees deck hill and plain,
Where songbirds carol in refrain,
 Virginia.

Here twine the gorgeous trumpet flowers,
O'er columned porch and latticed bowers,
Here rainbows shine thro summer showers,
 Virginia.

Here dwells the flower of maidenhood,
The noblest type of womanhood,
True gentlemen of noble blood,
 Virginia.

With charming grace are met in thee
Unrivaled hospitality;
Old fashioned true democracy,
 Virginia.

First in the Union, first to be
The Nation's guard of liberty,
First in the hearts that worship thee,
 Virginia!

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Friend of Friends

In all my travels to and fro
 Around this gladsome earth,
I've found one pal in whom I trust,
 One friend of honest worth.
However fortune frowns or smiles,
 Or rolls the daily tide ;
This friend of friends, unselfish, true,
 Is constant to my side.

His lineage and heraldry
 Are known the world around.
To him the kings of finance make
 Obeisance most profound.
He rules the trade of farthest climes,
 Inspires the halls of State,
Directs the wheels of industry
 The marts, however great.

Integrity is graven deep
 Upon his honest face,
The countenance of presidents
 Has lent him lineal grace.
Altho the sport of knaves and fools
 The prodigal and bum,

THE HARP OF LIFE

He is an oracle of speech
Altho his lips are dumb.

He holds the key to treasured stores,
The palaces of earth,
There's not a thing he can not buy
That has commercial worth.
And yet, withal his wondrous power
A residence he lacks ;
A vagrant o'er the earth he goes
Nor pays a cent of tax.

No matter where the feet may roam,
He'll take the journey too ;
The least or greatest service known
He's there to do for you.
He'll answer every human want,
And succor every ill.
Whate'er the debt, the loss, the claim,
He's there to pay the bill.

From dawn of life into the grave
'Tis well his gifts to hold.
With him to aid, your plans and dreams
Like flowers will unfold.
And you, with all his blessings proved,
Your fellow-men may bless ;

THE HARP OF LIFE

Your sympathies find recompense,
In daily helpfulness.

Of all your friends and worldly goods,
Take inventory now.
To this one friend upon the list
A balance you'll allow.
Throughout the changing scenes of life,
Come happiness, or ill,
The friend to have, and hold is this,
A hundred dollar bill.

THE HARP OF LIFE

A Picture of Evelyn

This unskilled hand can ne'er define
Her lineaments in fair outline ;
On facile canvas deftly trace
The beauty of my darling's face.

The magic skill of artists brush
Could not portray her cheeks' soft blush ;
The sparkling light within her eyes,
As lustrous as the noonday skies.

Her merry smile has all the theme
Of some inspired, enraptured dream.
Her winsome voice, so soft and clear,
As music falls upon my ear.

Then let this willing hand forbear
To paint the soul reflected there.
Such vain attempt were but a part
Of what I wear within my heart.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Writer's Cramp

It isn't the grip on the author's pen
Which causes the pain ; instead,
It's the indigestible, gaseous stuff
That rumbles around in his head.

Riches

I've been taking inventory of the riches I possess,
And I find my stock of treasures totals millions,
more or less.
Though I have no costly Jewels, and no paintings rare and fine,
Yet the wealth of earth and Heaven seem in measure to be mine.

I've no splendid storied mansion overlooking sward and flowers,
Neither have I seaside cottage where to spend vacation hours,
Stocks and bonds to me are fables, such as bankers like to tell,
Loans and discounts never charmed me with gold-alluring spell.

Neither do I wait the anchor of some ship far out at sea
Silken-sailed and home returning, as some precious argosy.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Fame and power and high position in their
train have passed me by,
Yet without these gifts of fortune, rich as any
king am I.

Down a street where lindens cluster, stands a
modest wayside cot;
Blooming flowers within the garden lend en-
chantment to the spot,
Climbing roses wreath their garlands festively
about the door
Where the sun thro lattice spaces sifts its gold
upon the floor.

From within, you'll catch the patter of im-
patient little feet
Romping, bright-eyed, joyous children, rushing
out my kiss to greet,
In a twinkle, I'm their captive, bound by
tight encircling arms,
Cares like magic flee the sunshine of their un-
affected charms.

Near the parlor window knitting, where the
sunset lances fall
Sits my saintly sweet-faced Mother in her
widow's cap and shawl,

THE HARP OF LIFE

There's a kindness in her manner and a look
within her eyes,
Makes me think she's near the threshold of her
home beyond the skies.

When the lamplight on the table throws its
shadows on the floor,
And appears my life-long Sweetheart in the
rose wreathed outer door,
In the old familiar greeting, and the tender soft
caress
I have glimpsed the vales of Eden from the
heights of happiness.

When the children all are nestled each within
his snowy bed,
And I hear my sweet-voiced Mother softly sing-
ing overhead,
With my lover's arm around me resting near
the lamplight's gold
I have all the Joy and riches that the human
heart can hold.

Pumpkin Pies

When the frost has touched the forests,
Tinting leaves with gold and red;
And the hunter seeks the footsteps
Of the rabbits' nimble tread.
When the chestnut burrs are dropping
In a shower before your eyes;
Then it is the ripened pumpkin
Changes into pumpkin pies.

Tho the pantry shelves are laden
With their store of rich preserves,
And you view the garnered bounty
Which the wifely thrift deserves;
Hungry eyes will hail the harvest
With a look of glad surprise,
If upon the shelf most handy,
Shines a row of pumpkin pies.

Rimmed within their flaky crust shells
Lies the golden, velvet sweet.
Cream and sugar richly blending
In this old remembered treat,

THE HARP OF LIFE

With a tinge of spice suggesting
Ripened fruits of piquant tang
Over this in snowy billows,
Spreads the foamy, soft merangue.

When the turkey flaunts his prestige
On Thanksgiving holiday,
And the salad and the dessert
Set around in fine array,
In a glass of Sherry lifted,
Smiling Joy you can't disguise,
You will toast the peerless merits
Of delicious pumpkin pies.

THE HARP OF LIFE

I Know a Little Avenue

I know a little Avenue
That leads to many hearts.
It lies along the sunny slopes,
And thro' romantic parts.

This road is ever smooth and bright
Wherein the weary feet
May find the plain of perfect peace,
And rest where life is sweet.

'Tis fringed along with old time flowers,
Heartsease, forget-me-not;
Its cooling shade is ever green,
Delightful every spot.

Here flows the spring of true content
From out the hidden rock.
Here storm clouds never dim the sky,
Nor felt the tempest shock.

The air is rife with fragrant bloom
And gay with singing bird;
Here little children throng the way,
And lover's song is heard,

THE HARP OF LIFE

And all who walk herein will find
True friends and happiness ;
This Avenue to many hearts
Is known as Cheerfulness.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Sympathy

I know the pain, the deep-plunged woe
When death has dealt its crushing blow.
The soul's great cry of deep distress,
The sudden void, the loneliness.

I know the longing day by day
For one bright smile to cheer the way ;
The tender touch of one dear hand
That moved the will at love's command.

I know the hush that pains the ears,
The hearts low call when night appears ;
The yearning sigh for that sweet rest
Which found its peace on one dear breast.

I know the hunger memories bring
To natures faint with famishing,
The sickness that finds no relief
In falling tears of poignant grief.

May faith and trust with mighty power
Sustain thee in bereavement's hour
That when life's griefs are overpast
He'll bring thee to thine own at last.

THE HARP OF LIFE

A Man Like You

I would nerve my strength for the bravest task,
For the sake of a man like you.
And conquering odds, the heart would ask
That reward be given to you,
For you were the star in cloud-hung skies,
Which led me on to the envied prize;
Steadfast light of my lifted eyes,
Joy of my way were you!

I would give the years of my youth all told,
All with my love for you.
Years when the path seemed paved with gold,
And the heart of the world beat true,
For you have given your best to me,
Worshipful love and loyalty,
Nurtured my faith in constancy,
King of a man are you!

But days of my youth, nor the trophies won
Can buy what I ask for you.
The years of a beautiful life are done,
The glittering hills in view,

THE HARP OF LIFE

But here on the edge of the Borderland,
As a kiss wafts down from your waving hand,
As you pass from sight you must understand
 My love for a man like you.

THE HARP OF LIFE

My Mother

God did not make her beautiful
As some fair women are,
Nor give her intellect the poise
Nor brilliance of a star.
Yet in her eyes He put a light,
Far lovelier than stars at night.

He did not place her in a sphere
Where social magnates shine.
Where wit and song sway lighter souls
To music's rhythmic time,
Yet in her voice was sympathy,
And all love's finer harmony.

God gave my mother nobler gifts
Than grace and loveliness,
Endowed her with capacity
So many lives to bless.
She made a home what home should be,
And left a stainless memory.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Easter Revelations

My sacrifices all are done, the Lenten season's
past;
And I can don my stylish gowns, and new
chapeaux at last,
For weeks I've hurried to and fro with breath-
less agitation,
That Easter bonnet, gown and gloves may
challenge admiration.

The Paris modes, you see, Lissette, quite well
become my beauty;
Tho I am pale you well agree from tireless
Lenten duty,
Yes, that's the hat with drooping plumes, and
gauzy crown aspangle,
You see, I wear it slightly tipped at this
coquettish angle.

My gloves, Lissette, and Prayer-book too, I'm
late, tell John to hurry;
These forty days of sacrifice have put me in a
flurry.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Who passed us then in that new car, they bowed
as tho acquainted,
With all their speed, I well could see the
woman's face was painted.

These poor old jaded, faded dames; their tricks
are most amusing,
The dotted veils which hide the lines are rather
to my choosing.

Ah, here we are, the church is packed, and there
is Mrs. Furman,
Yes, usher, seat us near the front, we want to
hear the sermon.

My! who's that frump with frizzy hair, on
bended knee confessing?
That ancient gown and last year's hat have
surely got me guessing,
I wonder if its Betty Brown? oh no, she's wear-
ing mourning,
There comes old Bonds in Easter togs, his
poorer neighbors scorning.

I sometimes think the Devil has a mortgage on
such sinnners,
Tho on the turf, or trading stocks, these
churchmen all are winners.

THE HARP OF LIFE

They're prospered—ah I see the eyes of widow
Simpson streaming,
Upon her careworn lifted face, an angel's smile
is beaming,

With husband gone and poverty to fight from
day to day,
I wonder that she has the heart to praise the
Lord and pray.

Yet there she sits unconscious of the wealth and
style about her;
Tho if she'd rise and say "I'm saved," I'm sure
no one would doubt her,

Perhaps she sees a vision—but what nonsense
am I thinking?

My Lord! there's Smithers, just divorced, at
Mrs. Hightop winking,
What scandal! here in Nabob Church, where
cultured folk assemble,
My anger fairly makes the plumes upon my
bonnet tremble.

What is the number of this hymn? oh yes, the
offertory.

On such sweet strains my soul could waft to
everlasting glory.

THE HARP OF LIFE

That vestryman in stylish togs, who's passing
round the platter,
Was once an old sweetheart of mine, who well
knew how to flatter.

But I was handsome then—who knows, I still
may get his money,
And give his wife a grand surprise, now
wouldn't that be funny?
My! but I'm sleepy, that old gump will never
cease his talking,
However, many folks I see are at my bonnet
gawking.

These sordid minds should turn from sin and
weigh the helpful text,
If they would fight this frowning world, and
safely win the next.
The closing hymn—here John, wake up and sing
this old selection,
Awake my Soul Stretch Every Nerve,—and
then the benediction.

But in a dream that afternoon, I had a revela-
tion.
Beside the Gates Of Life we stood—that morn-
ing congregation,

THE HARP OF LIFE

The rich, the poor were clad alike, aristocrat
and lowly;

When thro the crowd a woman passed, with
face serene and holy.

St. Peter smiled, and caught her hand and led
her thro the portal,

The widow with the angel face had passed to
scenes immortal.

Then suddenly the Gate was closed, and all
who stood outside

Were wondering if so grand a place to us could
be denied.

With sickening fear our souls were seized lest
by misapprobation

The King within might us deny some lofty
place or station,

When at the Wicket there appeared an Angel
with a Book,

Whereon the eyes of sinful men, nor angels may
not look.

“The Record shows,” the Angel cried, “that
much to you was given,

While others toiled thro sacrifice to win a
crown in Heaven.”

THE HARP OF LIFE

Then turning to St. Peter said, in solemn tones
and slow,
“Just phone for Satan’s limousine, and send
this crowd BELOW.”

THE HARP OF LIFE

Because

Because I have known your love dear,
The flame of its hidden fire ;
The pulse of my life beats high dear,
With the warmth of a new desire.

Because I have known your will dear,
Your dreams of a sunlit crest ;
I'll strive through the years to give you
The Joy of your soul's request.

Because I have known your kiss dear,
The throb of your heart into mine,
I've looked from heights of delight dear,
Down into depths divine.

Because I have known you, love you,
The love of my life aspires
To live for you, be to you, give you,
All that your heart desires.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Hollywood

(Richmond, Virginia)

Hollywood, thine open portal ushers men to
dreamless rest.

Infant babes, and grandsires hoary, find a
lodgment in thy breast,

Thou a silent city peopled by the hosts of
human kind,

Men of every creed and station, in thy halls a
dwelling find.

O'er thy terraced slopes and valleys, spreads
the shade of mighty trees.

Columbine and trailing myrtle waft their in-
cense on the breeze.

Here the ever-living holly flanks the outer City
wall;

Shading parapet and coping where the ivy ten-
drils fall.

Deep within thy vale embosomed, smiles a
crystal lake serene.

Waving grasses sweep its margin with their
nodding plumes of green.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Hollywood, thy sylvan beauty woos the heart
from grief and tears;
Like a garden, trimmed and blooming, every
lovely plot appears.

Here the willow, lowly bending, shelters some
sequestered square,
Here the rose in rich profusion breathes its
fragrance on the air,
Here no jarring notes nor clamor ere disturb
the deep repose.
Singing birds, with rev'rent voices, chant their
hymns at evening's close.

Through thy shaded aisles and holy, daily
moves a solemn train.
Some to bells that toll of anguish, others to the
martial strain,
From the humble home and mansion, come they
to their earthly bed;
“Dust to dust,” the good night spoken over
every coffined head.

Here the mother leaves her baby safe within the
warm earth's breast.
Here the widowed ones and lonely find forget-
fulness and rest.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Wealth and Pride in peaceful slumber dream no
more of place nor gain;

Here the poor, with prayers unanswered, find
release from want and pain.

Here the artist, soldier, statesman, heirs alike
to deathless fame,

Find the myrtle and the cypress wreath at last
an honored name,

Ours the trust, their sacred stories, love pre-
serves from age to age;

Chambered in the heart's recesses, rests each
hallowed, tear dimmed page.

Unseen hosts have thee in keeping, lovely City
Of The Dead;

Spirit eyes from heights immortal guard each
lowly, narrow bed.

Faith and Hope illume thy portals, speak our
loved ones glad release;

While the winds above them sighing whisper
peace, eternal peace.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Those Kids of Mine

Once Fortune took my hand to see
My various lines of destiny,
And as my palm she closely read,
She smiling cried, "You're soon to wed!"

"For you I see domestic life,
A gallant man and you his wife;
A little home, where song and cheer
With love, will crown the passing year."

"Your horoscope reveals to me
Maternal Joys as you shall see,
Two kids—a lively, healthy pair,
With cheeks of bloom and sun-kissed hair."

To show the truth of palmistry,
Man, house and kids were sent to me.
And on the screen of life unrolled,
I read the tale as Fortune told.

Those kids—the subject of my song,
Were mixtures of delight and wrong;
Despite advice, their one intent
Was glad good times, and that hell bent.

THE HARP OF LIFE

With garments rent and tousled hair,
They'd split the wind in foul or fair
To undo something Care had done,
Then hide and giggle at the fun.

They scorned the precepts I adored ;
Scoffed Wisdom's rules with one accord,
Defied the rod, and social creed,
They were the devil's own indeed.

At school they seemed quite out of place,
Nor sought to strike a winning pace,
With mischief they were right in touch,
Nor did their teachers praise them much.

My training seemed amiss, in vain,
Against such recreant high disdain
I viewed my job a failure sure,
A grief I scarce could well endure.

But Time's great tides which bear us on,
With undercurrents sometimes run.
Who sets in view each mighty force,
Alike can see the end and source.

The fires which moved those kids of mine
To daring deeds on danger's line,

THE HARP OF LIFE

Have led their feet in later years
To peaks sun-crowned, where Joy appears.

Full-statured now and strong they stand,
With faculties in full command.
As up the steeps of life they climb,
Where honors wait their fuller prime.

Their energies and talents show
The ways that love would have them go.
And eagerly for them I wait
The forward swing of fortune's gate.

At eventide I am imbued
With sense of Joy and gratitude
To Him who gave — as stars come out —
For kids I well may brag about.

Country Folk

I like the ways o' country folk,
So hearty-like and free;
Their sunny smiles and cordial grasps
Somehow just ketches me.
Their brimmin' o'er with life and health,
And soulful energy;
With busy hands and clever wits
Attuned to industry.

They keep in vital touch with life,
With wholesome things and true;
They understand our daily needs,
And know Just what to do.
Their lovin' hearts and helpin' hands
In Joy or deep distress,
Just overflow with kindly deeds,
And friendly tenderness.

They have a takin' sort o' way
Of doin' things worth while.
When you're alone, need cheerin' up,
They'll come and set awhile,

THE HARP OF LIFE

And like as not, if feelin' ill
And in the doctors care;
They'll send a dainty, garnished tray,
With choicest country fare.

They have a style that's all their own
Enhanced by rustic graces.
The sunny smile of toil's reward
Illumes their honest faces,
They have a stock of common sense,
For tried and proven worth
Beats all the scientific bosh
That circumscribes the earth.

When comes the merry shuckin' time,
With neighbors gathered round;
And deep within the golden pile
A crimson ear is found;
The lucky lad and blushin' lass,
At Cupid's bold suggestion,
Exchange a kiss and settle there
The matrimonial question.

When Autumn-time has given place
To Winter's frosty cheer;
When round the hearth and at the board
The farmer-folk appear,

THE HARP OF LIFE

They've got the best the earth affords,
Good health, abundant livin',
With minds content, and hearts that trust
The God that rules the heavens.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Supper Time at Home

When the evening shadows deepen
Into dusk beneath the trees,
And the bells of herded cattle
Tinkle softly on the breeze ;
When the plowman turns his horses
From the furrow in the loam,
'Tis the time a fellow's gladdest,
For its supper-time at home.

With the duties and the worries
Of the work-a-day all past ;
As you sit and rest reflecting
While the sunset splendors last,
There will steal upon your spirits
New contentment with your lot ;
Make the farmhouse seem a mansion
In a fairy garden spot.

As the Mother singing hurries
From the table to the stove ;
And you catch the tempting odors
Of the food you dearly love,

THE HARP OF LIFE

In the plate of golden biscuits,
And the chicken's fragrant steam;
Hungry eyes will read fulfillment,
Of the toiler's evening dream.

When they've brought the cream and butter
From the spring house in the dell,
And the lamp is on the table
With its cheery, homey spell;
As the children take their places,
Happy from their evening play,
'Tis a picture you'll remember,
'Tis the crowning hour of day.

Then a hush, as hearts are lifted
To the Gracious God above;
For the blessings showered upon them,
Through His daily care and love,
As the twilight shadows gather,
And the stars peep through the dome;
'Tis a sight to greet the Angels,
When its supper time at home.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Woman's Smile

It is the charm of charms to him
Who holds a woman dear,
Its value more than fortune's gifts
Or thousands won a year.

It lends her manners new delight
Her weaknesses a shield,
Her speaking eyes a light more bright
Than midnight stars may yield.

Her tenderest smile can plead the cause
Her suppliant lips forbear,
Can win the words of high decree
For Heaven or despair.

It is her silent yes or no,
To him who would discover
The path her timid feet would take
With some accepted lover.

When deep emotions stir her soul
And crowd to be expressed
The tearful smile which lights her eyes
Will tell her story best.

THE HARP OF LIFE

As spans the rainbow on the clouds,
When threatening storms are o'er,
So lights the clouded scenes of life
The smile all men adore.

THE HARP OF LIFE

HONNI SOIT QUI MALY PENSE

Do you wonder I loved him, or ever my pen
Should paint him a hero, or prince among men?
When thrown on the world, without knowledge
and poor,
Fate cast me a stranger one night at his door.

'Twas during the blast of a midwinter storm,
When penniless, naked, my shivering form
In helpless dependence was laid on his bed;
A charge on his bounty for raiment and bread.

Do you wonder I trusted the whole hearted
care,
Or Joyed in the comforts which waited me
there,
When couched by his fireside, and idly at ease,
I fed of such pleasures my fancy should please?

Do you wonder I ask you when nameless that I
Should yield to the lover-like smile of his eye;
Or willingly rest in his warm circling arms,
The sport of his fancy, a prey to his charms?

THE HARP OF LIFE

Was it wrong he should kiss me and call me his
own,

When curtained at twilight we two were alone?
To share in the pleasures affection inspires
And I the new theme of his dreams and desires.

But love's fond illusions are never to stay.
They pass like the blossoms which bloom for a
day;

Whose beauty and perfume but gladden the
hour
To brighten and fade, like the tints of the
flower.

The man who had entered my heart and my life,
Was wed to another—a sweet, trusting wife
Adored him as I did, as all women do
The men whom they honestly think to be true;

Nor guessed that her husband in under hand
part

Permitted a rival to enter his heart.
But was he the sinner my story implies,
Whose language and smiles were a series of
lies?

THE HARP OF LIFE

O no! he was all that is honest and sweet.
A man in whom Virtue and chivalry meet;
With will that could triumph o'er everything
bad,
The lover I sing of—**MY OWN GALLANT
DAD.**

THE HARP OF LIFE

O Tide of the Years!

Backward, turn backward, O tide of the years!
Turn to the era where woman appears,
Living her life with a sensible view;
Just as her Maker intended her to.

Something is wrong with the girls of to-day,
Restless and roaming, a traveling array,
Rouge-tinted creatures in veilings and lace;
Faces and figures sans feminine grace.

Bring back the woman whose charms are her own.

Fashioned and tinted by Nature alone.
Healthy and merry, who guiltless of art,
Captures the fancy and gladdens the heart.

Gone from the scenes of the country and towns,
The strong, ruddy lassies in fresh muslin gowns,

With picturesque hats made of ribbons and lace,
Coquettishly shading a beautiful face.

O where are the home-loving women of yore!
The mothers, the sweethearts we used to adore,

THE HARP OF LIFE

Whose ideals of living and womanly grace,
Could make of a cottage a glorified place,

Who valued the things that are finest in life,
The Womanly virtues in maiden or wife,
O tide of the years give us back our desire!
A mother, a sweetheart to love and admire.

Bereavement

O Heart of mine ! how still you lie to-night.
With placid brow upturned, so smooth and white.
The yesterday of time for thee is past,
Its friendships and its tears are o'er; at last
You stand beyond the boundary and see
The unveiled wonders of Eternity.
For thee no more death's pangs, or dreaded woes;
God's peace enfolds thy couch of deep repose.

Here by your side, within the shadows gray,
I count anew the Joys that made my day
Of life so sweet; the smiles, the songs of cheer,
The love on which I leaned each passing year,
Could I but live one day with thee,
How I would grasp the opportunity
To speak the word of praise, approval due
The many acts of thine, would strive anew
To make the measure of thy Joys complete,
The path a smoother way for those dear feet.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Could I but pierce the veil to-night and reach
Your listening ear with tender yearning speech,
This heart would bound to speak the loving
words,

More musical to thee than Heavenly chords.
How deep the hush, the loneliness I feel
As here beside your pulseless form I kneel;
Knowing the charm of life forever fled,
That I must walk alone, uncomforted.
In that bright world beyond how blest thy lot!
Henceforth these once loved scenes, a desert
spot.

Broken the heart that takes its leave of thee,
The last long look;—yet ere mortality
Shall tinge with deeper shade the lips, the eye
That speak so tenderly their last good bye.
Ere silence of the dismal yawning tomb
Engulfs my all, or ere the roses bloom
Shall breath its dying fragrance o'er thy head,
And thou art numbered with the dreamless
dead,
It seems your voice *must* answer to my call,
Your hand reach out to mine beneath the pall,
And draw me once again unto the breast
Where oft this head has lain in blissful rest,

THE HARP OF LIFE

But no—my dream of life is past, in vain
I call to thee to sooth the poignant pain
Which numbs the heart with its great agony,
Be kind O God and lift the veil for me!
I'll question not Thy love nor righteous will,
If this one prayer Thou grant, desire fulfil.
Give me to know ere dawn's returning light
My soul, transported, lives with her to-night.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Christmas Eve at Home

Arrayed in royal ermine, the earth is fair to-night,
New-cloaked in Winter Vesture, of soft and lustrous white.
All day the busy snowflakes have mantled roof and tower,
And hung with glistening garlands, each tree and leafless bower.

The summer rose is shrouded in pall of snow and sleet;
Like pulseless forms of loved ones beneath the winding sheet.
In silence closely hooded, loom distant peaks of blue,
While vales and hills are spotless in garments soft as dew.

Across the snow the pine trees fantastic shadows throw.
And sigh in mournful cadence to hear the Northwinds blow.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Above the storm-swept heavens the stars with
glory gleam,
Bright worlds commemorating the Orb of
Sacred Beam,

From yonder tower illumined, the Christmas
Joy-bells ring,
While fuller swell the anthems the little choir
boys sing.
The world is meet for Christmas, and peace and
love again,
Fall like a benediction upon the hearts of men.

Within, the yule log blazes upon the homestead
hearth,
While children's voices mingle in festive song
and mirth,
The mistletoe and holly, with gay festoon of
green,
On chandelier and doorway, enhance the
Christmas scene.

While proud within the corner a fragrant cedar
stands.
Awaiting globe and tinsel, and snowy pop-corn
strands.

THE HARP OF LIFE

By nine its magic beauty will gleam from crown
to base,
Bring shouts of admiration and smiles to every
face.

The time for Santa's coming, the mystic hour
draws nigh,
When hearts with Joy are swelling and pulses
beating high.
Each head is filled with wonder at what the
night will bring,
For Santa, sleigh and coursers are on the
Christmas wing.

As older hearts expectant with anxious Joy
await
The swinging of some portal that ushers
brighter fate,
So children watch and listen without the mystic
door,
That bars a glimpse of Santa and all his
treasure store.

From far is borne the music of sleigh-bells ring-
ing clear.
The children pause, and listen, then shout in
Joy — “reindeer!”

THE HARP OF LIFE

As to my side they scamper in ecstasy of glee,
Each one in frantic hurry to climb upon my knee.

With outstretched arms I gather the cluster to
my breast,
And smiling at the idea the childish lips ex-
pressed,
I head the happy marchers who up the stairway
go
Each brain awhirl with Santa, the reindeer and
the snow.

When snugly tucked, I leave them to dream of
Christmas day.
The toys the Magic Giver will spread in bright
array,
Each in its festive glory beneath the Christmas
tree,
To wait the shining faces and shouts of Christ-
mas glee.

With thoughts upon the children and all that
makes life dear,
I seek the flickering firelight where phantom
forms appear,

THE HARP OF LIFE

And there within the twilight, where shadows
come and go
I dream of absent faces, and days of long ago.

From out the dusk a homestead shines forth
with windows bright.

Adorned with Christmas garlands, a shine with
candle light,

It beams with olden welcome to each familiar
guest

Who homeward turns for Christmas, for happiness and rest.

And there within the doorway a mother's face
appears.

With outstretched arms she greets us as in the
bygone years,

Again we're little children who throng the dear
old home,

With doll and sled and dishes, with horn and
martial drum.

About the blazing fireside a little group I see,
Who nestle close in silence, with elbows on her
knee,

THE HARP OF LIFE

To hear about the Christ-child who in a manger
lay,
While angels sang hozannas for earth's first
Christmas day.

Assembled there in spirit, the generations meet,
The grandsire, youth and infant who make the
scene complete,
As round the dinner table we take accustomed
place;
Unmingled Joy reflected upon each smiling
face.

'Tis Christmas home with mother, with all the
charms of old.
'Tis Christmas with the loved-ones, endeared by
ties of gold.
Ere fades the happy vision, with wreaths and
tapers bright,
The heart reviews the picture aglow with love
and light;

And looks beyond life's shadows, to home be-
yond the sky,
The house of many mansions prepared for all on
high;

THE HARP OF LIFE

Where raptured hearts united shall speed the
seasons roll,
While Joy will flood forever the gateway of the
soul.

When Daddy Had to Cook

When mother left for grandma's house
To spend a short vacation,
Our trusty cook was on the job
To meet the situation.
Without a qualm or other fear
My daddy dear and me
Were just as happy keeping house
As any pair you see.

When much to our surprise one morn
The cook did not appear,
The dusky maid who'd fixed our meals
For more than half a year.
I flew to daddy's room in haste
To tell the situation;
That message filled his heart and mine
With wildest consternation.

He leaped from out that poster-bed
Like some mad beast of prey;
And doffed his pink pajamas
In a most informal way.

THE HARP OF LIFE

He neither shaved, nor brushed his hair,
Nor washed his hands and face
The way he talked the while he dressed,
Was positive disgrace.

With durns and damns he buttoned on
His collar and his vest,
Then to that sulking kitchen fire,
He said the shocking rest.
But when that stove began to roar,
The kettle hum and sing ;
He smiled at me and said, "My child,
We'll have a feast, by Jing."

"I'll cook the coffee, ham and eggs
While you arrange the table ;
The treat we'll have will rival that
In Mido's glowing fable.
So cheer up lassie, get the plates
And set the board for two ;
We know enough of keeping house
To see the problem through."

With willing hands I set to work,
As hopes rose high and higher.
When from that kitchen came a yell
Of fire! fire!! fire!!!

THE HARP OF LIFE

It chilled the blood within my veins,
I reeled against the wall ;
As through the door the belching smoke
Confirmed the frantic call.

I dashed in on that frightful scene
To see my father lying
Unconscious near that roaring stove,
Whereon the ham was frying.
The flames had caught the smoking fat
And played in wild gyration
Above that morning feast of ours,
With reckless dissipation.

Our eggs were cinders in the pan,
The coffee sputtered o'er ;
But what of him—my hero dad,
Unconscious on the floor !
With eyebrows singed, and whiskers scorched,
And blisters big as peas ;
With dabs of flour and spots of grease
From neck-tie to his knees.

Revived, I helped him to his bed,
And called a doctor quick.
My blackened, scorched and blistered dad,
Was not pretending sick.

THE HARP OF LIFE

And when his wounds were softly dressed,
He said to me, "My daughter,
Till Mamma comes I fear that we
Must live on bread and water."

Next morning in the Times appeared
This self-explaining ad.
A cook is wanted at Judge Smith's,
And wanted very bad,
No questions asked, just so she cooks,
And comes prepared to stay;
The best the place affords is hers,
With most substantial pay.

That night, when mother reached the house,
In answer to my call,
To satisfy her anxious thought
I had to tell her all,
She hugged me close and wept a bit,
As she did daddy too,
Then smiling said, "Cheer up my dears,
The sun is peeping through."

"For breakfast you'll have ham and eggs,"
And then with teasing look
She turned to dad and said "my love
Who taught you how to cook?"

THE HARP OF LIFE

"For never in our married life
Have you essayed the question
Of dietetics quickly solved,
Save by a good digestion."

Well, one thing's sure, whatever comes,
And mother's gone away;
I'll fly the coop with rod and reel,
And spend a peaceful day
In some lone spot beside a stream,
Or in some mountain nook;
If Bridget quits the job again,
And daddy has to cook.

THE HARP OF LIFE

There is a Life That Has No Death

There is a life that has no death,
 Beyond time's mystic portal.
Where we shall wake to scenes of light,
 With youth and health immortal.
A life undimmed by falling tears,
 Or pangs of mortal sorrow ;
Where pall, nor cloud, nor midnight gloom
 Will overcast to-morrow.

A clime where beauteous flowers no more
 To chilling winds surrender,
Where summer suns on landscapes fair,
 Shine with unclouded splendor.
Where birds no more forsake their nests
 In wearisome transition ;
But build in trees of living green,
 Which yield a rich fruition.

There is a land where we shall find
 The soul's sure habitation.
Where home's sweet songs will thrill the heart
 With rapturous exaltation,

THE HARP OF LIFE

Where with the loved we mourned awhile
We'll live in Joyous union,
With Him, the Pure, the Glorified,
In Heavenly communion,

A home in which our work shall be
Enhanced by sacred duty.
Where love shall find its recompense,
And hope its crown of beauty,
A life where love's unfinished tasks
Will greet our new endeavor.
Where dreams shall live in structures fair,
Forever and forever.

O sinless life that has no death,
O clime of fadeless glory !
O changeless home where hearts shall sing
Love's ever-living story !
Rejoice, O Soul, in Him, thy light,
Who crowns thy high endeavor,
With life and love and happiness,
Forever and forever !

THE HARP OF LIFE

Learn to Laugh

Learn to laugh, it is life's elixir,
Building body, soul, and brain.
Leads our feet to mounts of pleasure,
Far from vales of care and pain,
Laughter fills the heart with sunshine,
Clears the mind of doubts and fears,
Brings forgetfulness of sorrow,
Shows a rainbow thro our tears.

Learn to laugh, it is sweetest music
To the ear of him who strives,
In life's dismal, dusty places,
For support of other lives.
From the fount of glad emotions,
Thro the trying days and drear,
Let its overflowing sweetness,
Fill his soul with crystal cheer.

Learn to laugh, its magic power
Kindles, strengthens, beautifies,
All the toil and aspirations
Underneath life's changing skies.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Gives us riches more than millions,
Tints our dreams with gold and rose ;
Brightens, blesses all life's channels
Where its silver current flows.

THE HARP OF LIFE

When the Table is Set For Two

Two lovers they in a new-found home,
With dreams of the coming years.

In the tender light of their smiling eyes,
A world-old Joy appears.

The shaded lamp on the damask white
Gleams soft on the silver new,
As hand seeks hand in lingering clasp,
Where the table is set for two.

With the added years were the added leaves,
Till the ends seemed far apart.

But the added face was an added Joy
To broaden and bind each heart.

Then the evening lamp with its mellow glow
Shone soft as a light from Heaven,
On the happy pair with their group of five,
When the table was set for seven.

But the leaves are stored in the attic now;
The children of love have flown
And the aged pair by the evening lamp
Are sitting to-night alone.

THE HARP OF LIFE

But hand seeks hand with a tenderer touch
As stars shine forth in the blue,
And they speak in tears of the bygone years,
When the table is SET FOR TWO.

THE HARP OF LIFE

To a Musician

Within this quiet room once melodies
From raptured fingers woke these silent keys.
Whose soothing tones oft charmed the listening
ear

With softly rippling music, sweet and clear.
Here vibrant beauty caught the blush of morn;
The promise of delightsome years unborn.
This instrument was vocal with delight
When children tripped this floor with footsteps
light;

When older hearts held carnival of Joy
In masquerade, Deception's liveried toy,
Then Pleasure on these keys held merry din,
While mirth encircled happy hearts within.

In twilight hours, ere Night unveiled the sky,
These keys oft crooned some tender lullaby;
Breathed songs of love and rest, and homely
cheer;

Endeared the hearts which make the home
hearth dear.

Her Hope envisioned years on pinions soared
To those far heights where effort finds reward.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Where merit shares with truth unstained renown,
And Honor humbly bows to meet its crown.

These pulseless chords have uttered Sorrows' woe;

The pain of wounds that only great souls know
Spoke tender sympathies which stirred within,
Make all mankind in suffering akin.

Here artist touch has waked immortal strains
Which distant years will echo in refrains
From hearts which drink of hidden founts and clear,

Which breath delights of higher atmosphere.

Here thund'rous tones have sounded ocean's roar;

The mighty surge which beats the rock ribbed shore.

The tempest's flash across the midnight cloud,
The deafening charge of combat long and loud,
Here sunshine too like molten gold has shone
When storms were o'er; when peaks stood out alone

Against a windswept, radiant, sapphire sky;
When Earth smiled back the beauty framed on high.

THE HARP OF LIFE

When genius thrilled with fire these answering
keys,
O'erflowed this room with matchless har-
monies ;
The feathered songsters passing paused to hear
The silvery notes, divinely soft and clear
The evening breeze awoke with drowsy call,
Stole down the dell by tinkling waterfall—
Upon her breath the musk of mignonette,
To catch the spell, ere evening star was set.
Then Night her silver sifted down the sky
From urns of light ; and twinkling stars on high
Came out to hear the concord like a paean melt
away ;
As sunset hues dissolve at close of day.

O folded hands, in mouldering darkness hid !
Beneath the flowers, the earth pressed casket
lid
Life's sun was quenched in shades of deepest
night
When swung for you the gates on scenes of
light !
Somewhere, in all that bright Celestial throng,
With bards, you move the Heavenly choir
among ;

THE HARP OF LIFE

Where harp and harpist with immortal fire
Interpret joy and peace; the soul's supreme
desire;
Where life undimmed, to strains divinely pure,
With love reclaimed, forever shall endure.

THE HARP OF LIFE

When the Autumn Days Are Here

Summer lives in song and story as the fruitful,
flowery time,
When all Nature's clad in glory, and a bubblin'
o'er with rhyme.
But to me the best o' season's when October's
drawin' near,
When the golden grain is garnered, and the
Autumn days are here.

Then the air is keen and bracin' when you wake
up in the morn;
Feelin' like a stag defiant when he hears the
hunter's horn.
Every nerve with life is tinglin' as you button
coat and vest;
Bound the stairs to drink the sunshine with an
early mornin' zest,

How you hurry round the farmhouse, eager for
the early chore,
Take the pails that stand ashinin' on the shelf
beside the door;

THE HARP OF LIFE

Answer to old Brindle's lowin' in a way that
makes you think,
You've imbibed a nip o' toddy, or some other
cheerin' drink.

Milkin' done, you seek the kitchen, where the
breakfast steamin' hot,
Blends the country ham and waffles with the
fragrant coffee pot.
With an appetite surprisin', and a soul as full o'
cheer,
As the lusty, frosty mornin' of the season o' the
year.

Then with gun you go a huntin', far along the
wooded vale,
Seek the copse where hides the pheasant, haunt
the covey of the quail,
Mark the squirrels nimble footsteps as he leaps
the branches brown,
Huntin' stores for winter usage where the nuts
are droppin' down.

Trees and vines have lately yielded up their
fruitage fine and sweet.
And the cellar's full to burstin' with its stores
of things to eat.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Shelves with rich preserves are laden, casks
with wine are runnin' o'er;
Bins with rosy apples shining, tempt you with
their luscious store.

Though the kine have left the pasture for the
rick of ripened hay,
And no more across the fallow call the swallow
and the jay;
Still a glamour seems to hover o'er the fields,
about the lane,
Where the harvest hands a'singin', followed
home the laden wain.

Rev'rently, and somewhat thoughtful you re-
trace familiar ways,
With perhaps a tinge of longin' for the bloom of
summer days.
For the romance in the arbor, hid beneath the
roses sweet,
For the joys that now are perished, like the
leaves about your feet.

Still, there comes a compensation in the thought
that round the hearth
You will find the richer pleasures in the hours
of social mirth.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Seated with the boon companions when the
days are growin' chill;
Pledgin' friendship's old allegiance in the cider
from the mill.

Nature paints no fairer picture underneath her
azure dome,
Than the scene about the fireside in the twilight
hours at home.
What to you are changin' seasons, fadin'
blossoms, Autumn skies,
If about a glowin' hearthstone, love has found
its Paradise?

Bards may sing of Spring and Summer, and of
Winter's frosty cheer;
But to me the best o' seasons, is the Autumn
time o' year,
When the earth and sky are blended in a mist
o' rarest gold,
And the sweet old book of nature is a story
nearly told.

Then I know the grateful spirit which the Pil-
grim Fathers felt
When they sang their glad Thanksgivin' while
on hallowed ground they knelt.

THE HARP OF LIFE

There is something soul-compellin' in October's
kindly cheer,
Makes you thank the Lord you're livin' when
the Autumn days are here.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Love

Love is the great eternal power
Within the human soul,
Which drives the thoughts and acts of men
Beyond the will's control.

It is the heart's dynamic fire
Which threads its subtle course
Along the secret wires of life,
With mighty, tireless force.

It moves the energies anew
To nobler work each day ;
Its recompense a word of cheer,
Or smile along the way.

It is the architect unseen
Of fate's mysterious plans ;
Who builds for us a structure strong
Beyond life's shifting sands.

It is the path to that pure fane,
Both human and divine,
Where God's own hand has set alight
The sacred taper's shine.

THE HARP OF LIFE

It is the guide to Want's retreat,
And Sorrows dark abode.

To lift the cross, and set a crown
Where tears of anguish flowed.

It is the way that Pity takes
To find the world's distress ;
While white robed Mercy clasps her hand
With smiles of tenderness,

It is the Spirit ever-bright
Which answers every call ;
Pain's deep distress, Joy's fevered wants,
With equal grace to all.

It is the hidden fire within
To purify and bless ;
And sheds o'er Imperfection's face,
A radiant loveliness.

Love is a mighty, moving stream
Whose ever-rushing tide
Bears sin and grief upon its breast
Out to an ocean wide.

It is the beacon shining far
Across life's trackless foam ;

THE HARP OF LIFE

A chart and compass ever true
Where'er our sail may roam,

It is the star that points the way
O'er moors of doubt and strife;
And safely leads our stumbling feet
To higher plains of life.

It is the joy of that dear spot
Where faults are all forgiven.
Its glory lights its humblest room,
And makes our home a Heaven.

It is the language of the heart,
The warmth of friendship's hand;
The magic light of smiling eyes,
Whose speech we understand.

It is the blush on beauty's cheek,
The glow in beauty's eye;
The tear which trembles on her lash,
Where hidden fountains lie.

It is the artist's haunting dream,
The theme of poet's rhyme,
The charm of music's melting note
Of melodies sublime.

THE HARP OF LIFE

It is the vision shining fair
Thro aisles of happy rest.
Which pictures every dream fulfilled
Unto the lover's breast.

It is the music of the world,
Which onward leads thro strife;
As swells from out the victors' heart
The triumph-song of life.

O Love! of every life the way
That human feet have trod,
The light, the power in earth and Heaven,
That leads us up to God.

THE HARP OF LIFE

To Courtney

Do I love you little maiden
With a heart so warm and true?
In your eyes of sparkling beauty
Shines my heaven of azure blue,
What are seashells, damask roses
To thy soft cheek's blooming tinge?
What are hanging clouds at sunset
To thine eyelid's silken fringe?

You are dearer than the life blood
Surging thro this constant heart,
Not a joy that cheers its vision
But your face has central part.
Love that hopes, endures, and braves all
Garners every good for you.
That your heart may know the gladness
Of your dearest dreams come true.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Empty Cradle

The moonbeams kiss with lingering touch to-night

An empty crib; whose little pillow soft and white,

Still holds the imprint of a sunny head;

Which lately woke with smiles within this bed.

Like grieving bird above an empty nest,
With fledgling flown; the brooding mother-breast

Still yearns the touch of fluttering pinions warm;

The nestling head tucked close from all alarm.

Did I detect those covers lightly stir,
Or see the dimpled, waving hands of her
In beckoning call? or did an angel wing
Bend low, my baby's Heaven-born smile to bring?

O little empty cradle, soft and white!

You too will go beyond my touch and sight;

But like the new-made bed on yonder hill,

My aching heart will bend above you still.

THE HARP OF LIFE

My Reward

With song I've wrought the daily tasks
With needle, cloth, and broom,
The little house in order set,
Smiles fair from room to room.

The supper hints of hidden treats
To tempt his appetite ;
The table shines with snowy cloth,
And silver burnished bright.

At window sill I wait his step
As sunset fires grow dim ;
And all because his smile will say,
I'm all the world to him.

THE HARP OF LIFE

Sunset

The day had closed in beauty,
When up the flaming West
Loomed towers of glittering splendor
Above the mountain's crest.
Each gleaming wall of Jasper
Reflected far the tinge
Of fleecy clouds new-woven,
Which hung as some soft fringe.
While folds of ruby velvet
Draped low the Eastern sky;
As tho to veil the glory
That soon would rise on high.

Athwart the shining heavens
Of rose and burnished gold,
Were bands of sapphire blended
With crimson lace unrolled.
While scintillating jewels
Decked each window-pane,
Illumed the spire with glory
Above God's holy fane,

THE HARP OF LIFE

It seemed as though an Angel
Had caught my wish afar,
And passing thro the portals,
Had left the gates ajar.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Peaks of Otter

O mighty Peaks of mystic blue,
Upraised to heights of glory!
The morning stars thy birthday hymned,
When rang Creation's story.
A mighty temple, granite strong,
Thy Builder's thought impressing,
Enduring speaks from age to age,
Eternal truths expressing.

When blazing worlds took glorious form
From out His contemplation;
High o'er thy lofty spires they shone,
In matchless constellation.
When from the dark abyss of space
New forms the void supplanted;
God gave thee favored place, great Mount,
Amid green groves enchanted.

Thy sacred annals, deathless name,
Virginia's proud possession!
Virginian tongues thy praise will wreath,
With eloquent expression.

THE HARP OF LIFE

While from the South, the West, the North,
The traveler seeks thy glory,
He'll twine with Old Dominion fame
Thy ever-living story !

Sublime the heights where vistas spread,
The dim horizon cleaving !
Deep emerald vales, rich sapphire hills,
Tyrolean beauty weaving !
The spreading plains, the changing skies
Are mines of inspiration ;
Uplifting thought to Nature's God,
On wings of exaltation.

Here forest choirs in chorus chant
Sweet songs of pure elation.
As thro thy cloistered aisles they move
To shrines of adoration,
The main lay, the vesper hymn,
From raptured hearts upwelling,
Are borne in cadence on the breeze,
In joyous music swelling.

Before thy face the season's roll,
As sweep the tides of ocean.
Time's ever-changing scenes to thee,
But pageantry in motion.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The lives of men as fleeting clouds,
Wind-blown twixt love and duty;
As transient as the forest leaves,
Or summer rainbow's beauty,

Thy placid mien, paternal Mount,
Rebukes man's strife and worry!
Whose span is as an hour to thee,
Illspent in anxious hurry,
Thy solemn silence woos his heart
From scenes of toilsome fretting,
Thy peace instructs his weary soul,
In science of forgetting,

Above thy head the storm-clouds sweep,
Destructive combat waging!
Across thy breast the lightning leaps,
Like fiery billows raging!
Yet on thy ever-youthful face,
The tempest leaves no changes;
Serene you stand, defying shock,
Amid surrounding ranges!

At dawn thy beauteous face reflects
The crimson tints of morning.
Proud noonday sets her coronet
Thy kingly head adorning.

THE HARP OF LIFE

When to the glow of western skies,
The god of day surrenders;
Thy summits flame with radiant fires,
Entrancing sunset splendors!

When evening sooths to charmed repose
The world for dreamless slumber;
She sets on high her vigil lamps,
In glittering, glorious number.
The peerless moon, the blazing stars,
Come forth to tell Nights story;
And set above thy regal brow
A diadem of glory.

THE HARP OF LIFE

The Unseen

In the soft gray hush of evening,
When cares of the day are done;
And noise of the world about me
Has lulled with the setting sun;

I see in the gathering shadows,
Faces of those I have missed
Long years from their wonted places,
Where gently the dear feet pressed.

And voices long hushed to music
And mirth of the earthly song;
Are borne on the throbbing silence,
As notes in the distance rung.

While in thro deepening shadows,
Streams light of supernal ray;
Revealing a spirit convoy
Descending the shining way.

They bring to the waiting spirit
A peace that is half divine,
As in thro the heart's high portal,
They pass to the inner shrine,

THE HARP OF LIFE

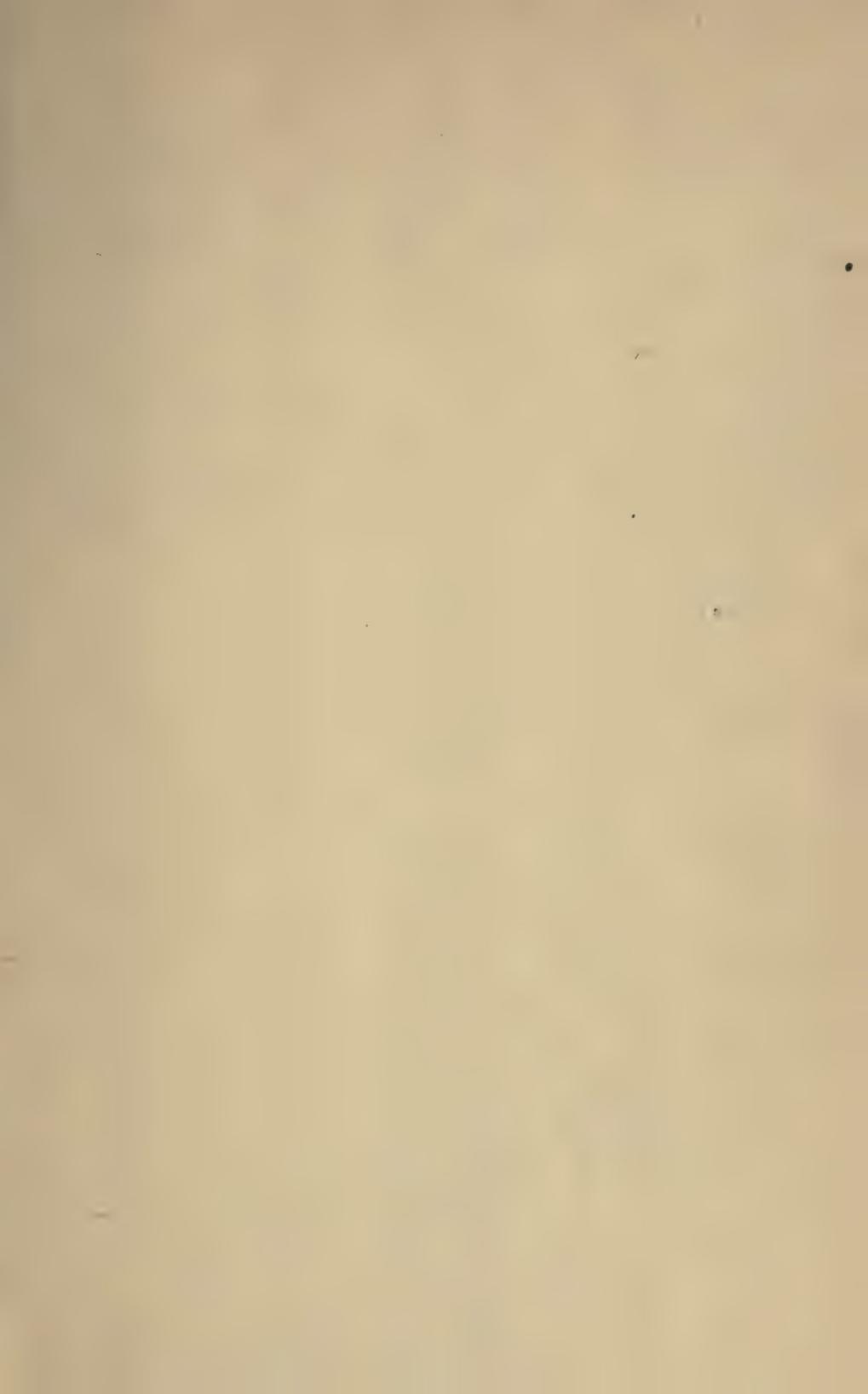
Loved hands light the altar tapers
Which long have been shadowed in gloom;
Set memory's censer swinging,
Exhaling a rich perfume.

Waking the chambered silence
To melodies low and sweet,
Pulsing in rhythmic measure,
To steps of the angel feet,

They chant as a choir celestial
Around the chancel of light.
Their faces aglow with rapture,
All vested in spotless white.

They sing of a realm unclouded,
With happy release from pain.
Of conflicts and sorrows ended,
Of love and eternal gain,

Gone are the twilight shadows,
And cares which oppressed me low
My soul follows after them singing,
As down thro the aisles they go.



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Author Allemong, Nettie P.

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